

3 December 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

We know that many families within our school community are struggling with the rising costs of living. Since September 2023, we have kept the price of a school meal fixed. However, regrettably, due to huge inflationary pressures caused by a minimum 25% increase in meal ingredient costs and an increase in labour costs, prices of a school meal at Appleton will rise from 1 January 2025.

The increase is still below the current cost of inflation and the rising food costs that our suppliers are passing on to school, as we will continue to subsidise some of these increases while we are still able to do so. The cost of our school meals also remains below what most other Bradford schools are charging.

- For Appleton Academy primary meals, the current cost of a school meal is £2.10
- From 1 January 2025, this will increase to £2.30

Are you eligible for Free School Meals?

We want to support our families in any way that we can and so if your circumstances have changed, or perhaps you haven't done it previously, and you would like to check if your child qualifies for free school meals, please contact school or our Parental Involvement Officer, Emily Chesterman. Colleagues can help you check your eligibility and provide you with the relevant paperwork to complete to apply for free school meals. Alternatively, you can do this yourself via the Bradford Council website:

<https://www.bradford.gov.uk/benefits/applying-for-benefits/free-school-meals/>

You can apply for school meals if you receive:

- Income Support
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income Related Employment and Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit with an annual income of less than £16,190, provided they are not receiving Working Tax Credit
- the 'Guaranteed' element of the State Pension Credit
- Working Tax Credit run-on (paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- Universal Credit with an annual net earned income threshold of less than £7,400

Whilst all children in Reception, Year 1 & Year 2 receive a free school meal, it is still important to check if you are eligible. We would also like to assure parents that our ParentPay and school systems operate in such a way that children accessing free school meals are not identifiable to others, which we know can be a concern for some parents who worry that children may in some way be stigmatised due to their eligibility.

If you have any questions or you would like to discuss this issue further, please don't hesitate to contact us by emailing info@appletonacademy.co.uk in the first instance.

Yours faithfully



Ms H Jones
Executive Headteacher